(b) if so, what are the steps being contemplated to restrict the entry of Foreign Companies; and

(c) if not, how Government intends to protect domestic industry?

THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): (a) The Government have put in place a liberal and investor-friendly policy for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

(b) FDI policy is incorporated as Schedule I to regulation 5(1) of the Foreign Exchange Management Act, Regulations under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA). According to these regulations, a person residing outside India or an entity incorporated outside India, except a citizen or entity in Pakistan, can purchase shares of an Indian company. FDI can be only through incorporation of a company in India under the Companies Act, 1956.

(c) FDI policy lays down ceilings on foreign equity in specified/sensitive sectors such as Broadcasting, Defence Production, Telecom, etc. The policy *vide* Press Note 1(2005) requires prior approval of the Government where a foreign investor has an existing joint venture/ technical collaboration or trademark agreement in the same field.

Awarding of research contracts by the Ministry

2351. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA.: Will the MInister of CORPORATE AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ministry awards research contracts to Consultants, NGOs, Academic and Research Organizations etc.;

(b) if so, the list of the research contracts with the name of the organizations awarded the research contracts in the last three years and its progress;

(c) whether the research contracts are illustrated on the website of the Ministry;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) what is the internal process in deciding the topics of these research contracts;

(f) whether the research contracts are awarded through a competitive bidding process;

(g) if so, the criteria adopted for the competitive bidding process; and

(h) if not, what is sanctity of the award process?

THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (h) Do not arise.

Setting up of Science Centres and Planetariums

2352. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Science Centres and Planetariums presently set up in the country and what are its functions;

(b) whether Government has any proposal to set up more Science Centres and Planetariums in the country particularly in Uttar Pradesh;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) when such Centres and Planetariums are likely to set up in Uttar Pradesh particularly?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) There are 27 Science Centres developed and run by National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Culture. In addition, 13 Science Centres have been developed by NCSM but run by State/UT authorities. Some of the Science Centres have planetarium as its component. The function of a science centre is to develop scientific attitude and temper and to create, inculcate and sustain a general awareness amongst the people.

(b) to (d) Setting up of Science Centres is a part of the ongoing programme of Ministry of Culture under the Science Cities scheme. The proposals received under the Scheme from various State Governments including Uttar Pradesh from time to time are examined by the Government of India in conformity with the approved norms/guidelines of the scheme subject to availability of resources.

Financial assistance for Art in Goa

2353. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any scheme to give financial assistance to persons distinguished in letters, arts and such other walks of life, who may be in indigent circumstances;

(b) if so, the essential features of the scheme;

(c) whether the scheme is in force in the State of Goa;

(d) if so, the financial assistance given so far to the applicants from the State since the commencement of the scheme;

(e) the number of persons covered; and

(f) the contribution made by the Central Government and the share contributed by the State Government alongwith details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Financial assistance is provided under the scheme to persons distinguished in letters, arts and such other walks of life, who may be in indigent circumstances and their dependents. To be eligible under the scheme a person should have attained the age of 58 years and the personal income of the applicant (including income of the spouse) must not exceed Rs. 2000/- per month. His contribution to art and letter etc. must be of significance. The Government has bifurcated the scheme into two parts *viz.* (1) Central Quota and (2) Centre-State/UT Quota. Under the Central Quota the beneficiary is given an assistance of Rs. 2000/- per month by the Central Government and under the Centre-State/UT-Quota the amount of assistance is shared by the Centre and the State Government/UT Administration concerned in the ratio of 3:1 *i.e.* Centre pays Rs. 1500/- per month and balance Rs. 500/- per month is borne by the concerned State Government. The financial assistance is sanctioned/ renewed depending on furnishing of Life and Income certificate by the beneficiaries.